CREATING  CLIMATES FOR GROWTH

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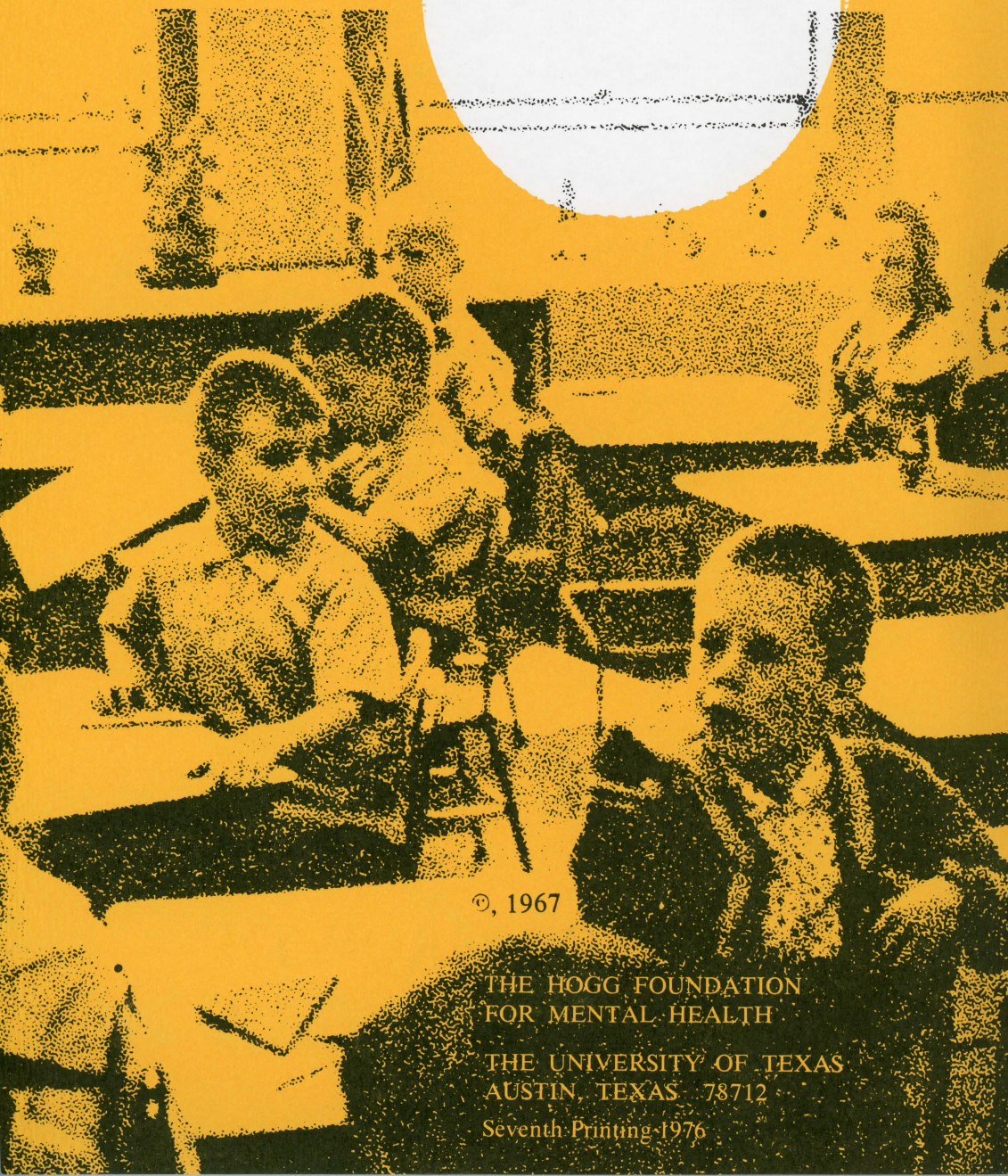

THE HOGG FOUNDATION
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FRANCES F. FULLER
OLIVER H. BOWN
ROBERT F. PECK

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Roy Wright Menninger, M.D., serves as President of The Menninger Foundation, having earlier directed the Foundation's Department of Preventive Psychiatry and the Division of School Mental Health in that department. He is a Diplomate of the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, a Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association and the American College of Physicians, and has served in an advisory capacity to many national and regional agencies and commissions.

The late *Frances Fallon Fuller,* Ph.D., Professor of Educational Psychology at The University of Texas, taught prospective elementary teachers and doctoral candidates in counseling psychology. Coordinator of the Assessment and Counseling Division of the Research and Development Center in Teacher Education, she had special interest in teacher preparation and the mental health of teachers.

Oliver H. Bown, Ph.D., has for the past 15 years been involved in the attempt to incorporate knowledge of personality and relationship dynamics and of the process of change into enriched programs of teacher education. He serves as Director of the Research and Development Center for Teacher Education at The University of Texas. He is a Professor of Educational Psychology and is past-president of the Texas Psychological Association.

Robert F. Peck, Ph.D., began his research with teachers in 1955 with the help of the Hogg Foundation. Since then he has continued with support from the National Institute of Mental Health and U.S. Office of Education. Director of the Research and Development Center in Teacher Education and of the Personality Research Center, he is also Professor of Educational Psychology.

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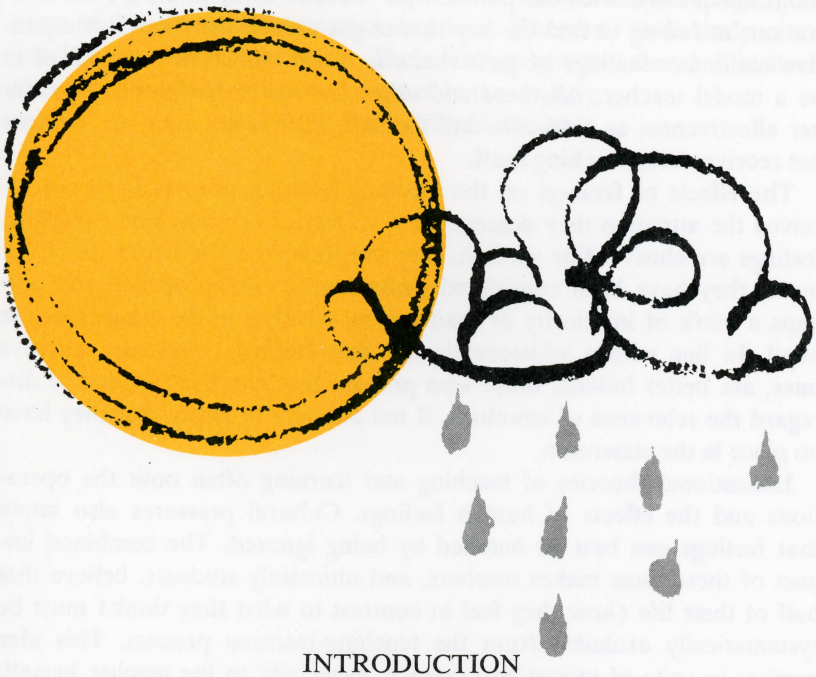

INTRODUCTION

"What is a good teacher?" "How can fine ones be produced?"

For years these questions have haunted the educators of teachers. As it is with issues which have no single, simple solution, the responses have been varied, passionate and often contradictory.

Teacher preparation, with its emphasis on the twin thrusts of content and method, reflects a prevailing view that education—the transmission of knowledge from teacher to student—is largely, even entirely, a cognitive operation. It is essentially a matter of determining what children ought to know, defining a method which explicates it clearly, then teaching these to the candidate teacher.

What has often been omitted, perhaps often considered irrelevant, has been consideration of the feelings which exist in the teaching-learning situation. How a boy feels about school—about the constraint which requires him to go every day whether he wants to or not; about the seeming irrelevance of arithmetic, especially when it is hard; about the teacher and how fair she is—profoundly affects the amount and the quality of

how much and what kind of information he absorbs. The teacher has feelings, too: her exasperation with the custodian who won't clean her room adequately, with the parent who "doesn't seem to care"; her frustrations at failing to find the key that might unlock the silent, unresponsive child; her feelings of guilt that she might somehow have failed to be a model teacher. All these and other feelings may significantly alter her effectiveness as a teacher and the satisfactions she receives, or does not receive, from teaching itself.

The effects of feelings on the teaching-learning process have not received the attention they deserve for a variety of reasons. For one thing, feelings are elusive. For another, they are thought to be irrelevant. Even more, they have been considered embarrassing, inappropriate and perhaps a mark of inferiority or inadequacy, whether in the teacher or the pupil. In line with a widespread view that feelings, especially negative ones, are better hidden, those who prepare teachers have tended to disregard the relevance of emotions, if not actually to imply that they have no place in the classroom.

Educational theories of teaching and learning often omit the operations and the effects of human feelings. Cultural pressures also imply that feelings can best be handled by being ignored. The combined impact of these facts makes teachers, and ultimately students, believe that half of their life (how they feel in contrast to what they think) must be systematically excluded from the teaching-learning process. This idea persists in spite of mounting evidence, especially to the teacher herself, that the ways we feel about ourselves, our environment, the people in it, and the tasks before us affect what we do and what we learn.

As is always true with taking a critical position, it is easier to point with alarm than to propose ready alternatives. Fortunately, increasing numbers of educators and teachers have begun to struggle with these problems: how to prepare teachers to understand the emotional life of their charges and use this perception to enhance the teaching-learning process; how to help teachers to recognize and to deal more effectively with their *own* feelings and reactions, even to utilize this empathy to become increasingly sensitive and responsive.

The authors of this pamphlet are pioneers in the search for answers to these questions. They have been laboring for some years with these very problems. Out of their efforts have come some new and challenging indications of just how much teachers are helped by learning about basic human feelings and the effects of emotions on behavior. This knowledge almost certainly helps these teachers to become more sensitive and responsive, and more aware of their strengths and limitations—in short,

to become better people. Even more importantly, these teachers become more effective at helping their students to become better learners.

Drawing from their wealth of experience, the authors have highlighted some of the issues and outcomes they have observed. Their study carries implications of great moment. Their ideas ought to infect and radically alter every teacher-education program in the country.

ROY W. MENNINGER, M.D.

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CREATING CLIMATES FOR GROWTH

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER FOR TEACHER EDUCATION THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS

I. BACKGROUND

No man can be a man alone. Humanness as we know it is possible only in relationships with other humans. The quality of that humanness depends, to some extent, on the quality of all the human relationships a man encounters, especially those which come early and are intimate and enduring.

More than any other professional group, teachers bear an awesome responsibility for determining the quality of our humanness. Every person who will ever occupy a bed in a mental hospital, every parent, every professional man, every criminal, every priest, was once in some teacher's first grade. Somewhere, sometime, everyone in our society has known a teacher who might have influenced him. The teacher's opportunity for impact is thus both broad and deep.

The teaching task is also enormously complex, psychologically. First, teachers have intimate and enduring relationships with all kinds of children. Teachers are the only professional group which comes into contact with all our children. Psychiatrists see a few of them, pediatricians see many, but only teachers see all children. They "take all comers" without self-selection on either side. Neither their pupils nor the parents of their pupils can select them as they can in most other professions. Except for the comparatively few children in privately supported schools, parents must accept the teacher of the classes to which their children are assigned. Consequently, teachers are denied the comforting knowledge that they have, on some private criteria perhaps, been chosen by the people for whom they perform their services. And each parent expects the teacher to understand his special child. Teachers thus have the responsibility for understanding and teaching children of all social and economic classes, all religious persuasions, all backgrounds and beliefs.

These teacher-pupil-parent relationships are neither brief nor superficial. They are deeply personal. As for the parents, all are, appropriately, emotional about their children's development. Teachers thus work normally in atmospheres which are, overtly or covertly, charged with emotion, pride, disappointment, joy, grief.

When parents place their children in the teacher's care, it is not for an hour when they can stand by to help, encourage or neutralize the teacher's influence. Pupils often spend more time with their teachers than with their parents. Customarily, children are assigned to the same teacher for a year, a long time in the life of a child. The teacher determines much of what the child sees, hears, says, and does. The teacher can place limits on the child's freedom; he is, in fact, society's adult representative to the child, invested with the power of that society at a time when adults are most important to the child.

The task of the elementary school teacher is complex because it is an intimate, enduring, powerful relationship with all kinds of children and all kinds of parents. It is also complex because each individual in these myriad interactions is himself complex and always partially unknown both to himself and to the person with whom he interacts.

To illustrate this a four section diagram represents one individual as he is known and unknown to himself and to others.

		Self	
		Known	Unknown
Others	Known	Public	Incongruent
	Unknown	Private	Unconscious

The public sector is what is known both to the person and to those who know him. The color of his hair, his name, and his grade in school are public information. He knows them about himself, and others know them about him.

The private sector is what is known to a person but not to others. These are his secrets, the things he could tell if he would, the name of his imaginary companion, how much he is willing to pay for a house and what he dreamt last night.

The incongruent sector is what is known to others but unknown to the person. The classic example among children is the transparent lie which others know to be a lie but which the child believes is accepted as truth. But it is not limited to children. When an adult shouts angrily "I am not angry," others laugh because they know what he does not apparently know, that he *is* angry.

The unconscious sector is what is recognized neither by the person nor by others. Consequently there is no way of knowing what, if anything, is there until it "dawns" on the person or someone else. Sometimes experience from this sector moves to the private sector, as when some insight dawns which one feels surely to be true about a past experience but did not "know" before. Sometimes experience moves from the unconscious to the incongruent. Something about a person may become known to others without becoming known to him, as when he angrily reveals his anger to others without knowing it himself.

Each pupil, parent, principal, supervisor to whom a teacher relates has his own public, private, incongruent and unconscious areas of experiencing. The teacher too, has his public, private, incongruent, and unconscious areas of experiencing. All may be in evidence in a single teacher-parent conference like this one:

Mrs. Smith, Jenny's mother, told Mr. Volk, Jenny's teacher, that she wanted Jenny to do her best but did not put pressure on her beyond her capacities. (Both Mrs. Smith and Mr. Volk recognized that this was true; therefore, this was publicly known to both of them.) Privately, Mrs. Smith hoped she could report to her husband that Jenny did less foot-dragging at school than she did at home in order that Mr. Smith would not be so hard on Jenny. (This was private, known to Mrs. Smith but not to Mr. Volk.) Mrs. Smith did not know that Mr. Volk saw that she was tense and not paying full attention to his suggestions about outside activities for Jenny. (Her tenseness and inattention were apparent to Mr. Volk, but Mrs. Smith was not aware of them.) Neither of them knew that Mrs. Smith felt as though she and Jenny were almost one person and that Mrs. Smith was tense because whatever was said about Jenny might as well be said about her.

Since this teacher is a person, he too is both aware and unaware of some of his experiencing.

Mr. Volk told Mrs. Smith that her daughter was one of the quietest children in the class. Privately, he was anticipating the next parent conference about a child who might have to be retained. Mrs. Smith realized Mr. Volk didn't know Jenny very well because he called her Jinny, probably because her name on the school records was Virginia. However, she didn't mention it and slurred the e when she mentioned Jenny's name. Neither of them realized one reason Mr. Volk was hurrying through the conference was that he didn't want to overcommit himself to Mrs. Smith. He regarded her, without actually thinking about it, as an overprotective mother.

Both Mrs. Smith and Mr. Volk are participating in a complex interaction. Its complexity can be compounded when others are involved; e.g. if Mr. Smith were present. Its complexity is further increased when other factors, such as the social and economic backgrounds of the participants, are different or when some more or less irreversible decision is under discussion.

Such complexities are not limited to parent-teacher conferences. The interactions of children with teachers are complex, too. The teacher makes choices, "simple" ones like which of 20 waving hands will get the nod to respond or "more considered" ones like transfer of a child to another classroom. In making such choices, both aware and unaware experiencing is involved. In the act of choosing one waving hand over another, the teacher may awarely be choosing the child who rarely volunteers. The children may be aware that, from those who volunteer least, the teacher generally chooses boys rather than girls. The girls, acting on this feeling, may tend to volunteer less often.

II. THE TEXAS PROJECT

Until recently, little was known either about the psychological complexities of the teacher's task or about ways of helping teachers cope with these complexities. As late as 1962, Seymour Sarason, in "The Preparation of Teachers, An Unstudied Problem in Education" described the teaching task as "psychologically unknown." So it was, and to some extent, still is.

Funded by a grant first from the National Institute of Mental Health and later by the United States Office of Education, the College of Education of The University of Texas undertook research in this complex area.

Since 1959, more than 366 prospective elementary and secondary teachers have participated in the Mental Health in Teacher Education Project* and the Personality, Teacher Education, and Teaching Behavior Project.

* A three year grant totaling $45,580 was given by The Hogg Foundation for Mental Health for the research project, "Mental Health in Education" during the period 1955–1958.

Attempts had been made before to "improve" the mental health of children by instructing teachers in good mental health practices, hoping that if teachers knew intellectually the results of research, they would be able to apply this knowledge in their interactions with children. Unfortunately, however, information does not always change feelings or behavior, and such attempts at changing behavior by imparting information usually fell short of their goals.

The Texas project differed from previous research in that it attempted to study the teacher herself, her concerns, her potentialities, her limitations, her tasks, and the problems she as an individual might encounter in teaching. The objective of the research was to use the information gained to help each prospective teacher anticipate what she might run into in her teaching and to help her cope with problems *before* they arose.

In terms of the diagram about the known and unknown self, one objective of the research was to help the teacher bring to conscious awareness those aspects of her experiencing of which she was not aware but which might influence her teaching and the responses she elicited from children.

This means that the teacher has no major areas in which the class is "on to him" but of which he is unaware. It means that he knows his own biases, his limitations, his potentialities. (This is, of course, an ideal unlikely of accomplishment but a goal toward which the teacher can move.)

Such self awareness as this has practical rewards. Many so called discipline problems, the bugaboo of new teachers, are symptoms of teacher incongruence, because children know what the teacher does not know: whether he is easy to fool, how much they can"get away with," what will confuse or annoy him.

The directors of the project realized that if education is a fruitful dialogue between the self and the environment, the teacher must be a scholar capable of communication with what is "out there" as well as what is "in here." He must see himself and the world without distortion, and have the tools, skills, and attitudes which make his scholarship available to him and communicable to others.

To implement this underlying purpose, both "in here" and "out there" help was given. Psychologists as well as specialists in content areas such as mathematics, science, and reading were involved. Content specialists instructed and supervised the teaching of prospective teachers. Psychologists added something new to the preparation program. Through confidential individual and group counseling, an attempt was made to understand these prospective teachers as individual human beings. These confidential conferences were tape recorded and transcribed, always, of course, with the knowledge and consent of the participants and with full protection of their anonymity.

At the same time, the teaching done by these prospective teachers was placed under the microscope of camera, tape recorder, and trained human scrutiny to discover how these teachers interacted with children, what kind of people they were, what they did, and how the children responded to them. Teachers were filmed teaching whole classes of children very early in their careers, in some cases almost the first time they stood on their feet before a class. Along with their counselors, these teachers saw films of themselves teaching. Their reactions to their own films were tape recorded. They were then asked to recall what they had been thinking and feeling while they were teaching, and why they had responded as they had.

During all these sessions, the counseling psychologist attempted to see the world as each teacher saw it. One objective was to discover more about the subjective experience of teaching, and what it felt like to learn to teach. A second hope was that, if teachers themselves experienced increased awareness of themselves and of the world surrounding them, they would, having *experienced* this (rather than merely being told *about* such experiencing), be likely to help their pupils to such awareness.

III. SOME FINDINGS

One finding was that new teachers have common concerns about themselves and their own adequacy. They shared four main kinds of problems.

A. COMMON CONCERNS OF NEW TEACHERS

The first question they try to answer for themselves is "Where do I stand in the school?" They need to know simple things like how to find the classroom to which they are assigned, where the visual aids are stored and whether or not they can get a seat in the teacher's lounge. They need to resolve complex questions like what is the invisible power structure of the school, who is highest "in the pecking order," what behavior is really rewarded. Is the teacher really valued whose children are encouraged to ask cogent questions, or do the nods of approval (and the annual salary increases) go to the teacher who stays until five grading papers

and has the neatest (teacher-made) bulletin board? This concern seems at first glance to be a self-protecting one, and it is. But the teacher is asking also, "how can I get things done?"

The project directors recognized that a teacher must feel secure herself in the school before she becomes concerned with the subjective experiencing of her pupils.

Teachers were next concerned with answering the question, "How adequate am I in the classroom?" They wanted to be able to answer questions children asked, to maintain order in the class. This concern was most important, and many were "stuck" here, unable to interact constructively with children until they had resolved their worry about class control and subject matter adequacy.

Third, teachers were concerned with understanding the behavior of individual children. They asked "Why does he do that?" Fourth, they wondered how they were being evaluated individually, by the principal and by parents, colleagues, and supervisors.

It should be noticed that none of these concerns are generally thought of as being of prime importance. But answering these questions is an important part of learning to teach, since it seems that until these questions have been at least minimally resolved, it is difficult for teachers to become involved with what the child is actually learning.

These need to be resolved individually for each teacher as a person. They may seem to be shared by all new teachers, perhaps by administrators, college instructors, and anyone new to an organization whose service involves interpersonal relationships. But the resolution of these seems to involve what each person brings as a unique individual to the new situation.

When these concerns were resolved, teachers then seemed better able to become involved with what are generally viewed as the "real" tasks of the teacher. Teachers finally asked "Who am I really?" and then "How does what I do influence what they learn?" "How does what I *am* influence what they are becoming?"

B. DIFFERENCES IN TEACHING STYLES

As the project progressed, teachers were able to see that there is no one "effective" teaching style. Various teachers are helpful to students in different ways. The teacher who can win over a recalcitrant slum child may not be able to answer the substantive questions of a professor's son, and the teacher who fires the bright child's imagination may be bored with the problems of the disturbed child. Knowing this seemed to help teachers accept their limitations and relieve the disabling guilt some felt because they could not be all things to all children. It also helped some

teachers to seek schools and particular classrooms in which they could be most helpful.

Through the project it became apparent that some teachers develop teaching styles which seem to reach more children than others. One finding which kept reappearing was that when teachers, even very new and inexperienced teachers, resolved their concerns about power structure and self-adequacy, and became aware of their own potentialities and limitations, they were often able to create for individual children climates which were so enhancing they might even be called therapeutic. Mike's teacher created such an environment for him.

Mike is a healthy six year old. In some ways he is like most six year olds: sturdy, energetic, active. He likes to please his teacher, tattles on his classmates, is afraid of being late to school, doesn't want to be singled out for either praise or reprimand.

He is also different from the others: he is clumsy, ruthless, anxious, tense sometimes; he swoops down on smaller children; often asks what time it is; has unpredictable bursts of noisy affection and black rage; he tries to take command, but no one follows him. He constantly tests the limits of his teacher's authority over him, always pushing to see how far he can go without being stopped.

His teacher recognized his hostility and gave him the means to make it legal. She let him take apart a bird's nest and tell the class about it. He cut a tulip bulb in half and labeled the cross section. He helped her cut construction paper, dig holes for the class garden. In one class play, he was the hunter in the jungle; in rhythmic activities he pretended to be a bulldozer. Since sometimes he still needed to fidget, tap or bang distractingly, she gave him his own box of putty to roll and knead and dig, a satisfying temporary outlet which did not disturb the class.

His teacher recognized his fear of inconsistency, his need for regularity, one shared by many children. In different content areas she emphasized the rules and regularities within subject matter, in nature and the world to help him feel he lived in a dependable universe. He loved to mix colors to assure himself that the same mixture came out the same way each time.

She recognized his special need for boundaries. In his outbursts she did not hesitate to hold him back physically if necessary, firmly but without hostility of her own, to prevent him from hurting himself or someone else. She set symbolic boundaries in his work, too. In art, he learned to put down a double sheet of newsprint to mark the boundaries where he could paint or color.

His teacher emphasized his strengths. Sometimes even a seeming limitation could be a source of strength. When the class did a mural, he did the sky, sweeping, swooping, ominous at times. But his special project was in wood, an enormous block, deeply cut, smoothly sanded, never quite completed.

She knew he needed a male model she could not supply. She hoped some day he'd have one. Meanwhile, for him and others, she selected heroes with whom they might identify, like Ingri and Edgar C. D'Aulaire's "Abraham Lincoln," the story of a boy who channeled his aggressiveness.

An extraordinary teacher? Yes, Mike's teacher is a composite of several who set themselves the task of using themselves and the resources of the classroom to help a child who might well have been a troublesome child, perhaps even deeply troubled.

Many teachers, it was found, are quietly extraordinary in their different ways, with different children. Peter's teacher was such a teacher.

Peter was the child many adults might consider merely well behaved. He was quiet, obedient, did little work but caused no trouble. He never brought his "Show and Tell" and rarely spoke to another child but otherwise was unremarkable. He often didn't seem to hear what went on but his teacher noticed that he could operate the tape recorder with ease; and when she brought a wired board to class, only Peter could connect the wires so the light would flash.

His teacher sensed his fear and sat him near the door to ease his feeling of being trapped. She did not try to make him speak but rather created situations in which he had to speak, was caught unawares, or in which his participation would not make him stand out alone.

She sensed that his intense interest in living things was paralyzed by fear of contact with them. When one child brought his dog to school, she let small groups play with him in turn and noticed how Peter both hoped and feared the pet's approach. She let him feed the class' rabbit and noted how protective he became of his other Peter, Peter Rabbit, his first friend who needed him and could not hurt him. She felt Peter needed to be useful to the other children, or be valued by them. She put him in charge of the tape recorder and one day he even got the stubborn projector to work, a high moment.

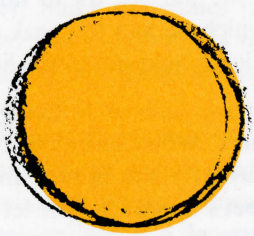
She created situations where he *had* to speak, or communicate in some way to ask for what he needed. She deliberately failed to give him some colors he needed for his art work. She stopped bringing the rabbit's food, and he had to get that himself. When the tape recorder wouldn't

reach, he had to ask for the extension cord. His project was to build a telephone, which automatically made him the center of attention the day it was completed. She brought a Polaroid camera to class once, and he was transfixed. He even sat down and figured how long it would take him to earn the money necessary to buy one.

What these teachers did *not* do is as remarkable as what they did. Peter's teacher did not urge him to speak, or call attention to his reticence by some unusual reward when he did. She did not urge other children to befriend him nor protect him from the consequences of his limitations. She did not assume that he was like other children, that he would "grow out of it" or that he was recalictrant, spoiled, or moody.

Mike's teacher did *not* respond to his hostility with anger, denial, or exasperation. She did not fall into the traps he set for her: she knew that his anger came from deep within him and that it was not directed against her; thus, she was not angry back. She knew his anger was beyond his immediate control, and she did not exhort him to behave. Instead she held him back and prevented his transgressions before they occurred. Most of all, she knew that emotions have their own logic and did not try to apply to them the usual logic of the mind.

Both teachers used resources at hand: their own perceptiveness; the strengths Mike and Peter had within themselves; the other children in the class; the regularities of the world; the tasks, expectations, equipment, animals, books, machinery, and all the resources of the classroom and of the world of which the school is a part.



IV. HOW TEACHERS LEARN

These teachers did not try to "solve" the problem child, but came closer and closer to an appreciation of how the world looked from behind the child's eyes. This method of coming closer and closer to an understanding of the full complexity of another person was found to be helpful to teachers. It relieved them of the burden of defending actions which are really indefensible. No professional practitioner, or scientist for that matter, can with perfect accuracy "diagnose" a human being. He can instead,

use his more sophisticated resources, to come closer to understanding others. The teacher has her own resources—herself, her power as the teacher, and the child's need to be valued and developed.

A. SUCCESSIVE HYPOTHESIS TESTING

This method for understanding children is an informal adaptation of what a researcher might call "successive hypothesis testing." First teachers look, make observations, try to gather relevant information. Then they make some surmise about what these observations mean and test their guess against new observations. These might be consistent with the guess, or they might be partially consistent and partially inconsistent, necessitating the modification of the guess and the trying out of a new one. Then still more observations cast more light on the problem until the teacher feels certainty about her guess and is able to say "Perhaps if I do this, that will happen." What happens when she does "this" is another observation which enriches still more her understanding of the child, and enables her to predict with a little more precision what he will do.

Somewhere along the way, she has a notion of causation. She begins to understand why he does what he does and what will help him do what he wants to do but cannot. From among the resources at her disposal, she chooses for him those which may increase his knowledge, skills, his power. This method is, implicitly, what all teachers probably use informally to understand children.

Teachers who learned in the process to understand their own biases, who were given opportunities to examine their own expectations, felt increasing confidence as teachers, had more positive attitudes toward their teacher preparation program, and were more likely than other new teachers to plan to remain in teaching.

B. OBSTACLES TO OBTAINING RELEVANT INFORMATION

The study indicated that teachers need to be taught to "see" what they might otherwise overlook. Really seeing another human being is not merely a matter of looking at him but is limited by what one has been taught to observe, is prepared to see, and can bear to see. Thus, often, people do not note what they do not *wish* to see.

Elementary teachers for example rarely "see" masturbation although it occurs in classrooms. Some student behavior is vaguely "seen" somewhere on the edges of consciousness but not attended to sufficiently to stir action. For example, when student teachers viewed films of themselves, they frequently commented that the films were helpful because they pointed up the students who were inattentive. Such a student might

be a child directly in front of the teacher, even one at whom the teacher seemed to be looking, or an elaborately bored adolescent expansively combing his hair or making mocking grimaces.

These misperceptions are not limited to new teachers but may occur in researchers or professional observers. The case of Carlos might serve as an example.

> Carlos was an acne-scarred student teacher who rarely made a contribution to the student teaching seminar, saying always that the problems of the other student teachers did not seem relevant to him. The counselor who conducted the seminar, saw him as a deprived young man, a Latin American boy who had not had a chance in life, and gently but unsuccessfully tried to encourage him to participate. She went for help to a consultant who listened to the tape recordings of the seminar. He could not see Carlos physically, but he heard his passive hostility very clearly. The counselor then realized she had "bought" Carlos' hostility and fallen into the trap of taking responsibility for his participation when this responsibility was his, not hers. She later thought, "How could Carlos expect to get anything out of the seminars when he wasn't putting anything into them?" She had not been able to begin to think how to help him because her preconceptions blinded her to his subtle hostility.

Although there are many obstacles to obtaining relevant information, the six which appeared most often in teaching situations will be illustrated here.

1. PRECONCEPTIONS WHICH DISTORT WHAT ONE SEES

For most people, preconceptions color or even distort what they see. The implications of what such preconceived notions between teacher and child can mean in the classroom are great. The study was aimed partly at helping teachers understand how their preconceptions or expectations could stunt a child's growth.

A teacher may think of a beautiful child as a "beauty" and be so taken with her outward appearance that she values her for this alone as though her beauty and the pleasure it gives were all the contribution that child needed to make. She may make few demands of the child and so inadvertently stunt the child's ability to work. On the other hand, if the child's ability to work, to tolerate the painful or less interesting aspects of life is already stunted, the teacher may resent her habitual use of her good looks to "get by" without effort, and so make demands of her which are beyond her now impaired capacities.

The child who is always dependable may be seen by her teachers in terms of her product, valued when she succeeds but rejected when she

fails until all her capriciousness and impulsivity are squeezed away. On the other hand, the babyish one may be excused.

One's estimate of each child's potentialities is influenced by his expectations about the child, and may well be underestimates of what the child can do. The child may be trapped by expectations so that his actual potentialities are not developed.

2. CONCERN WITH ONESELF

The most common obstacle to securing relevant information, however, is not overconcern with the other person, but concern with oneself. One finding which kept reappearing in the research with prospective teachers was that until teachers' own security needs had been satisfied, they did not involve themselves deeply with the needs of their pupils.

Teachers who could observe unselfconsciously and objectively seemed to be those who had found their place in the power structure of the school, who felt sufficiently secure with their colleagues, the parents of their pupils and most important, with their principal and other supervisors, to be able to forget their own needs for security sufficiently, at least temporarily, to concentrate their attention upon what was "out there" instead of just what was "in me." Sometimes a teacher's concern with her own security could be cruelly damaging to a child as happened in this case.

> Barbara S. said she wasn't sure the child had cheated: there was no way to prove it. She was afraid that, in case he had and the other children knew it, the class would look down on her for not being smart enough to catch him. If he hadn't and she accused him, his parents might come down and complain to the principal. So she decided to *imply* she knew he had cheated without actually saying so, to protect herself in case he had.
>
> The child surely felt devalued by the insinuation that he had cheated, but he could neither defend himself nor make restitution. The teacher was, understandably, concerned with herself and her own security. She was afraid of censure, of admitting that she did not know whether or not the child had cheated. She could not even begin to understand the child because she did not feel free to have an unsolved problem on her hands, to say "I am not sure, I do not know."

3. FEAR OF EMOTION

Sharing painful experiences with others is difficult for almost everyone, including teachers. When another person expresses feelings of hopelessness, depression, one's first impulse is to reassure and comfort him. Sometimes this action prevents the unhappy person from saying all he wants to say. An adolescent, for example, may need to express some deep feeling but he turns it inward because it embarrasses every adult he knows.

Unhappy feelings are not the only kind from which one turns. Sometimes even subject matter can be embarrassing if it involves deep feelings.

In one class, the students sang for St. Patrick's Day, "My Wild Irish Rose."

"And some day for my sake
She may let me take
The bloom from my wild Irish rose."

The student teacher said to her supervisor, "I think that means that she won't be a virgin any more after they are married, but when one of the children asked 'What does 'bloom' mean?', I didn't know how to tell them. I said it just means that they would grow old together so she wouldn't be young any more."

4. BEING CAUGHT IN ONE'S OWN NET

Each man is, more or less, trapped by himself, by his past experiences, present vantage point, expectations for the future. Although experiences furnish guidelines for understanding others, one's own experiences sometimes distort perceptions of another person's feelings.

Mrs. M. said that Mary constantly procrastinated with her work, but she thought if someone could just get her started, she would be all right. "I've tried to tell her that we are all like that. I do the same thing with my ironing, but once I get going, it isn't so bad after all."

Mary had a different reason for *her* procrastination, as demonstrated in a session with her teacher and the counselor.

Mary: I promise myself I'll do better. I try to do good, but I put it off.
Mrs. M: Sounds like me with my ironing.
Mary: (Voice cracking) I keep saying, this is no good.
Counselor: Maybe even if you do it, it won't be good enough?
Mary: (sobbing) I want to make it better.
Counselor: Do you know that if you got all the words wrong, Mrs. M. would still like you? (Mary sobs) She might not like what you *did* but she'd still like *you*. (sniff) Ask her if she would.
Mary: Would ya?
Mrs. M: Of course I would. (pause) And I'll bet your mother would too. (Mary sobs again)
Counselor: Well we can't answer for her mother. She's a different person. But Mrs. M. can answer for herself. (sob) Do you believe her?
Mary (sobbing): I made a "C"—a "C" on a notebook!
Mrs. M: Was that this year? (Pause) I don't remember it.
Mary: I do!
Counselor: Do you know that you can get a "C" and still be an "A" person? (long pause) You don't believe that either, huh?

Mary: (not crying) I do, but I didn't know it."

Mary's teacher had assumed that *her* reasons for procrastinating and Mary's reasons were the same. But Mrs. M. procrastinated with a dull job when she had more interesting, or more pressing, things to do. Once she got started, the job assumed some interest to her, and she could finish it. Mary, on the other hand, was always starting, perhaps writing her name afresh three times, erasing, starting over, upset about a too-tall "t," an "o" not round enough to suit. Mary tried to tell all this to Mrs. M. but at first Mrs. M. could not hear Mary say "I promise myself I'll do better. I try to do good." She only heard "I put it off," and this rang a bell in Mrs. M's own life.

But Mrs. M's reactions, "Sounds like me with my ironing," "I'll bet your mother would too" and "I don't remember it" (the "C") were constructive because they were self revealing, self involving and above all, real. She allowed what was truly there to be exposed to view so that the kinks in what was going on might be straightened out. As it turned out, it was *not* like the ironing; Mary's mother did *not* like her just as well when Mary got a "C." But Mrs. M. could and did. Further, when she understood Mary's reasons for procrastinating, Mrs. M. could use her own considerable ingenuity and the resources of the classroom to help Mary.

"I told her the grades are like little boxes I use to separate the *work* she does. Some work goes into the A box and some into the C box, but that's just where I put the *work* not *her*. The other day when she made a mistake, I told her, 'That just makes you more human.' I think she liked that. Some children need more pressure, but she needs less. For her, mistakes are *progress*. They mean she took a chance!"

5. FEELING BARRIERS OF SOCIAL CLASS

Middle class teachers usually see quite clearly the problems of the ambitious, conscientious child. They have often been ambitious, conscientious children themselves, who ascended the social ladder by trying hard, sometimes at the price of headaches and ulcers. The bright, advantaged child who has his own library, swimming pool, and horse may be more difficult for them to see and hear as individuals. Such teachers may regard these children as rich, lazy kids who have everything too easy.

One such teacher did escape her own "net" of preconceived ideas about these children when she began to look at her classroom from behind *their* eyes rather than only through her own. She said:

"The counselor mentioned to me that the children I've been referring to him have been the 'ulcer types.' The bright rich kids with the swimming pools and saddle horses just seemed lazy to me. Last week one yawned right in my face and it struck me that he was bored! Now five

of them conduct their own math class outdoors, with a different one in charge each day. They write their own lesson plans. I o.k. the plans, give them special problems and some wild tests. They'll be two years ahead in math by June and maybe even know a little about responsibility for themselves besides!"

She had previously been concerned primarily with the feelings of children who were much like herself, hard workers. When she looked at the "lazy" ones as individuals, she discovered that the tasks she was setting for them were probably too easy and they were bored with them and her. In some ways, these children were ahead of her. So she set a new, more difficult but still possible and rewarding task for them.

At the other extreme, middle class teachers who have been taught that one must work for what one gets, express disapproval of lower class children's expectation of getting "handouts." One said:

"He gets his shoes from the PTA, his lunch from the school, his clothes from the other children. He needs to learn that you have to work for what you get. You can't get handouts all your life."

The same teacher would not expect a middle class third grade child to work for his clothes, lunch, or shoes. Somehow it seems all right for a child to expect food and clothing from his parents but not for him to expect them from welfare.

Many teachers, nevertheless, can be extremely insightful about lower class children and their academic disabilities. One teacher had a migrant child who at nine couldn't write his name. When Juan saw a printed word, he covered up his eyes. He and his brother Dan had a Title I teacher who wasn't afraid to start with them where they were. Dan told her, "I can't help my mother any more. She's been promoted to the second grade." Their teacher didn't laugh. She didn't try to teach them to read either. For a long while she just listened. She found that Juan hated the clumsy boots he had to wear to school, and she dug up some new black shoes for him. Juan told her his favorite food was Post Toasties which he had once, and his next favorite was peanuts. She brought him some peanut brittle in a can and he learned "Dan" and "can." They were his first two words. He has many words now. He reads and stamps his new black shoes. He couldn't read before because he was not a person. Non-persons cannot read. Since he is a person, he can read and do the things that persons do.

6. FACING THE CONSEQUENCES OF BEING INFORMED

Some new teachers did not secure relevant information about a child because they were, without realizing it, afraid of the information. Understanding why a child does what he does may necessitate taking action

which will cut off from the teacher satisfactions she gets from the child's behavior.

New teachers, for example, want to be liked. To avoid being disliked herself, a teacher may encourage a pattern of behavior which is self defeating for the child. Two student teachers discussed such a situation.

St. T. 1: But I haven't moved him away from his friends. I told him to find a place where he thought he could do his work. If he sat on the chandelier, I'd just love it, *if* he'd pay attention. He says, "Why are you always picking on me?" I said "You're the one I see talking. But you contribute so much when you *do* contribute." I told him it's constant turmoil and I just can't have it.

St. T. 2: Maybe he knows you are fond of him and he can get away with a little bit. Maybe you should really get tough.

St. T. 1: (sighs) It would be *so* easy if I didn't like him. So easy to tell him to sit down and shut up, but I'm afraid I'm going to hurt his feelings and squander the little initiative he has.

St. T. 2: Maybe it's not *his* feelings so much. . . .

Student teacher 2 was right: the feelings getting first consideration were not those of the child, but of the teacher. Fearful of alienating him, she could not bear his asking her to set him free of her unwelcome need of him. He had to misbehave to prove he *wasn't* teacher's pet; *she* could not free him from being teacher's pet. Because of her own need of him, she could not get the message he was sending, or free herself to look for obvious solutions to her dilemma.

She knew that if she allowed herself to see *consciously* what she clearly *did* see, albeit through half-closed eyes, she would have to take some action she was not prepared to take. She said it herself: "It would be so easy if I didn't like him. So easy to tell him to sit down and shut up." The consequences of telling him to sit down and shut up would be a look from him—a look of hate perhaps or of disdain.

C. WAYS OF SECURING INFORMATION

Conferences with teachers and observations of the ways they came to know children more deeply indicated that teachers secured information from many different sources. One source of information was the child himself, particularly as he revealed himself through his class responses and his classwork. Another source of information was the teacher's own subjective responses to the child. The responses of the other children to a particular child were also a rich source of information for the teacher. Finally, the work of the classroom, its tasks and goals, always furnishes varied resources from which the teacher can draw to test hypotheses and devise methods for helping children.

1. ATTENDING TO THE CHILD

Because seeing children and listening to them, really attending to what they say and do, is important, one current research effort is directed toward writing computer programs for teachers in which the computer presents a child's statement and asks the new teacher what the child could have meant. Eventually, it may be possible to have a sound film of a child making the statement in order that the new teacher can consider how he says it as well as what he says. Such practice in "attending" is probably needed for many teachers.

Preliminary analyses of the sound films of new teachers indicate that teachers do a lot of what we came to call "travelling:" the teacher goes where *she* intends to go without much regard for the responses of the children. She may be covering a certain amount of material, to reach page 63 before the end of the hour, and if the children show disinterest of lack of understanding, she travels to page 63 even if the children do not reach the same destination.

One common reaction of teachers to their films was surprise at the behavior of the children they were teaching, children at whom they had been looking but had not really seen.

The teacher's principal source of information about the child is the child himself. Some teachers observed were skilled listeners and really *heard* what was implicit in a child's remark rather than merely what appeared on the surface. A teacher might ask a child why he had not completed his homework assignment. The child might reply, "My father promised to help me, and I waited for him, but he didn't come." The teacher might just hear that the child had not done the work and hear nothing else. The attending teacher, however, could hear the child say that he had not done the homework, that he wondered why his father hadn't come, that he used up the time waiting, that he felt let down, that he felt uncertain about doing this kind of problem on his own.

2. GAINING INFORMATION THROUGH CLASSWORK

Even when the teacher is able to forget her own needs, to escape her own biases and expectations, merely looking and listening is not always sufficient to understand children deeply. But she has many other avenues close at hand which lead to the child's inner world.

One of these is the child's production in class: his themes, art work, poetry. Psychologists have long used these to deepen their insights, to understand another person so that he can be helped to set upon the path he wants to take. One teacher had her class draw self portraits. Not surprisingly, the most feminine girl portrayed herself in bows and long eyelashes, the meticulous one in painstaking detail. Most children's work

confirmed the hypotheses the teacher had already formulated on the basis of other observations. But some surprised the teacher: the vacant Orphan Annie eyes of one, the claw-like hands and long sharp-looking teeth of another. She said, "I don't draw any *conclusions* from them, but the children's work furnishes bits of information which sometimes help me to understand what baffled me before. I get leads and new ideas that would not have occurred to me otherwise."

Having children complete sentences: "When I read. . . ." or "After school. . . ." helps the teacher to enter into the child's world a little more, gives her some information not just about his life outside school, but about his fluency (the length of his sentences), his openness (how often does he leave one blank), his perception of his own adequacy in school work.

Using such techniques knowledgeably does not mean the teacher has to be a junior "psychologist." Children's productions are a commonplace of the classroom, and all teachers interpret them according to their proclivities and skills. To those who can "read the writing," they can be a rich source of information about the inner experiencing of the child and about the impact of the world upon him.

3. DEPENDING ON SELF AS A SOURCE OF INFORMATION

Listening to oneself is, for many people, an unaccustomed occupation. Trusting what one hears when one listens to oneself and acting on it requires considerable autonomy. Yet each teacher must be, eventually, his own final authority.

Student teachers said that this was, not surprisingly, difficult for them. They often looked upon their supervising teachers as models and tried to imitate what they did even when the supervising teacher was very different from themselves. They took action which they assumed to be "illegal," i.e., disapproved by their supervisors, but which worked. They had interactions with children which were human, tragic, comical, and above all real. They would not for the world share these with an outsider, certainly not their supervisor. One male student teacher said of a pupil and the classroom teacher:

> "Bill and I just understood one another. He was the bane of Mrs. Jones' existence, but she tried her best to ignore him. I did too at first, but then I just decided that for me at least it was better to bring his misbehavior out in the open, and handle it directly, with a light touch if I could. When she was out of the room one time, I told him, 'If you do that again, I'll stomp you.' He laughed but he didn't act up again with *me*. He knew I meant to call his hand, and by gosh, I would have. No one mentioned it to her. She had her way, and I had mine."

Sometimes a child would ask student teachers questions of a personal nature: "Who was your date at the circus Saturday night?" The student

wanted to tell the child but wondered whether this was "dignified" or "professional." After school, a child might ask a student teacher if he could sit on her lap. The student teacher sometimes felt the child *needed* the affection at that moment and would feel quite comfortable herself about doing it, but think, "Mrs. Brown would not approve."

Sometimes supervisors of student teachers faced the same kind of problems in dealing with their student teachers. One supervisor told how she learned the hard way to trust her *own* feelings about a student teacher.

> In all my conferences with the school principal, he emphasized what good relationships Lillie had with everyone and what a good job she was doing. My own feeling was that she was competent, so competent that I felt vaguely unnecessary around her, all thumbs. I hated to admit it to anyone, thinking it must reflect some inadequacies of my own. Finally I told the principal that I was afraid that I could not grade her fairly, that I felt uneasy around her, that I did not relate to her as I would like. To my amazement, he admitted that he felt the same way and so, it turned out, did almost everyone. Lillie was competent all right but also competitive. She seemed to have to prove her competence by defeating everyone, including the children she was teaching. Until the principal and I could admit to ourselves that this was how she affected us, we could not begin to understand her. When I told Lillie how I felt, I found she was quite a lonely woman. She tried to play it cool, to be even more efficient, and succeeded only in alienating still further those to whom she really wanted to relate.

Lillie's supervisor had to be aware of and admit her own feelings about Lillie before she could share these feelings with someone else. In the same way, teachers had to be aware of their own real feelings about a child before they could begin to understand how that child affected other teachers and other children. Sometimes they had to fall into the trap he set for everyone. Lillie's efficiency was her smoke screen. Many people undoubtedly avoided relationships with her without knowing why. Similarly, teachers have to acknowledge what the child is doing to them; terrifying them, boring them or just getting no reaction at all—being anonymous bodies. When they know how *they* feel, they can begin to wonder, is it more than just my personal reaction?

4. KNOWING LIMITATIONS OF SELF

One kind of information each person can get only from himself is information about his own limitations. One perceptive teacher reported:

> "One girl in my senior English class has a crush on me. She writes me poetry, sends me cards, is underfoot every time I turn around. At first I was flattered but then it got to be too much. So I just decided not to

let her make me do what I couldn't do *willingly*. She'd wait outside school for me and say her ride hadn't come and hint that she wanted me to drive her home. I didn't take the hint, just left her there. She was hurt at that moment, but that was better than letting her impose on me until I resented her and treated her like a pest. *That* she couldn't bear. What I *can* do with a willing heart, I do. I put her in charge of costumes in the senior play so she could make friends with the VIP's in class. I encouraged her to spend time writing a melodrama for class presentation instead of making presents for me. I have my limitations and one of them is my need to leave school *at* school and not take it home with me."

A teacher who knew herself less well, or was less willing to admit her limits to herself, might have seriously damaged her worshipper when she was eventually caught disdaining her unwelcome attentions. Instead, this teacher could say "This I can do for you and what you need in addition, we will provide elsewhere—from the resources outside me: the senior play, other students, your own talents." In other circumstances, transferring a child to another teacher, without apology or guilt, may be the course of action most helpful to a student.

5. EXPLORING QUESTIONS OF VALUES

Sometimes questions arise which leave a teacher in a quandry. She thinks "Am I too old fashioned, not sufficiently shockproof? Is this really unhealthy behavior or am I just not 'with it'?" One teacher reported a moment of such decision:

"The first time it happened, I thought it was an accident even though I could feel a hand quite distinctly moving down my leg. The next time, in the milling crowd, I knew it was no accident. For a moment, I was paralyzed by surprise. Then I wheeled and glared. 'David you stop that this instant.' It crossed my mind that some psychologist might say I was traumatizing him, but I didn't care. He can't go around doing that and getting by with it."

This teacher trusted her own instinctively healthy reaction and from her own feelings secured information which furnished a first step in helping him.

"I knew I *had* to do something right away, something fast. He was so quiet, so stealthy. He knew it was wrong. If I had done nothing, it would have been the same as encouraging him. He would have had me hooked as though I were playing some secret game with him. If *that* had happened, I couldn't even begin to get help for him. I would have just pushed it out of my mind and that would have been bad for me and worse for him!"

6. NOTING RESPONSES OF OTHER CHILDREN

One way a teacher can see beyond her own biases and limitations is by attending to the reactions of a child's classmates to him. A child's classmates see him more intimately than his teacher does. Children usually know the child to whom they can go for help with a difficult arithmetic problem and who will be the most acceptable leader of the baseball team.

Teachers were often able to correct their misperceptions about a particular child by observing how other children reacted to him. A common example was underestimation of a child's maturity. Student teachers sometimes gave extra help to certain children whose classwork was poor. They might be more permissive, allowing the child to make up work he had missed on the assumption he needed their support. One teacher gave his example:

> Paul would finish his work after I had talked to him repeatedly about it, but otherwise he wouldn't do a thing. I thought my encouragement was helping him until he was chosen by the children several times to lead things. Then I realized I was just nagging him. He wasn't insecure at all. He got along just fine without me. He had plenty of friends. He really didn't need my encouragement at all.

V. MAKING GUESSES ABOUT CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOR

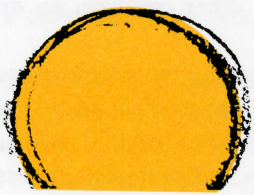
Once a teacher has opened herself to a child and his behavior, she can order her observations and make some guess about why he acts as he does.

Mike's teacher, an example cited earlier, made many observations about Mike and some of them had characteristics in common. She noted that he fell on the same level; he tripped over his own feet; he lost balance on the bars; he ran as though he had weights on each heel: his teacher guessed he was poorly coordinated. Again: his fingers were stiff when they were touched; he gripped a pencil tightly; his calf muscles were often drawn up: his teacher guessed his poor coordination was related to his tenseness and that if he were less anxious he would be less clumsy.

When no regularities like these are apparent to the teacher, a consultant can be of use. When the teacher has made many accurate, undistorted, documented observations, including perhaps tape recordings and samples of the child's work, a consultant can help the teacher put *her* observations together so they make sense to *her*. Of course, one observation does not make a diagnosis. The consultant might put the observations together in several different ways. He might offer one kind of explanation and then another. Some of these explanations might sound very logical and professional to the teacher but not "make sense" in the light of all the other unspoken, even unremembered, things she knows about the child. Then a different explanation might make such sense to her that it seems to be speaking about that very child and even accounts for observations she had forgotten or perhaps had not realized she had made.

Whether the teacher makes the guess herself or the consultant helps her with it, the "sense" it seems to make is one way of evaluating its usefulness. If that guess makes sense out of still other observations about the same child, observations which did not go into the construction of the original guess, the teacher can be fairly certain it is a useful way of thinking about that child. This fitting more observations to the guess is a small, informal kind of repetition, or replication of the procedure used to formulate the guess in the first place. It is as though one has four pieces of a jigsaw puzzle, an ear, an eye, a hoof and tail, guesses it is a horse, and then gets a hoof, a mane, and an ear. One still is not absolutely sure it is a horse, but the second group of pieces makes him surer that his guess was right.

In general, the most useful guess is the simplest, most economical one which explains the largest number of observations. The most useful *set* of guesses usually consists of a few simple guesses which are consistent with one another and make sense out of *all* the observations made about a child.



VI. HYPOTHESIS TESTING

Once a teacher has formulated some hypothesis about a child's behavior, how does she go about testing her own hypothesis? Here is how

one teacher did it:

"Janie does her assignments neatly, but she never smiles. Sometimes I see her mumbling to herself; but if she sees me watching her, she quits. I thought at first she might warm up to me if I took the initiative. I talked to her privately, but she would not look at me and obviously wanted only to get away. Then I looked over her work again and noticed how very neat it was, how carefully she did every little thing. I thought maybe she was under some kind of pressure and—this sounds silly—that she was afraid of making any mistake. One day I said, 'Someone isn't listenin' meaning someone else and she looked as though I meant *her*. I thought 'She feels guilty. Maybe she feels guilty about *any* little thing.' I told the class a story about a broken vase in a family and let each student write an ending for it. Janie wrote, "The wind blowed and it fell off by itself. I didn't do it. I didn't NOT."

If one looks behind this simple sounding account, and retraces the steps this teacher took to look more deeply into Janie's world, he finds first that her teacher was able to make observations without personalizing them. She did not make any premature assumptions: that Janie's avoidance of her was directed against *her,* that Janie really wanted friends and needed opportunities, that Janie had deep unconscious conflicts, was schizophrenic or pre-psychotic.

Second, the teacher formulated a preliminary hypothesis, that Janie merely felt strange because she did not know her new teacher. The teacher tried this out (most teachers would not call this testing an hypothesis because the title sounds too fancy for so usual a thing). This hypothesis was not supported. It was still a *possibility*: Janie might just have needed to go to the bathroom and tried to get away for that, or some equally mundane reason. Still, the preliminary hypothesis did not check out on first testing; thus, the teacher made fresh observations by looking at old evidence again, and found signs she had not noticed before, that Janie was so much neater than the other children, so much more careful that it seemed unusual.

Janie's neatness itself was unimportant. It became a helpful sign, a bit of evidence only because her teacher knew from wide experience what behavior was usual for children of this age, grade and social situation with these resources. Very few professional persons besides teachers can make such fine judgments so knowledgeably.

The new evidence was not explained by the preliminary hypothesis. New children who just feel strange temporarily are not typically so neat and careful. So the teacher tolerated a period when the problem was unresolved, when she had no hypothesis and when, if she had been asked,

"What's wrong with Janie?", she would have had to say, "I don't know—yet."

In the ongoing life of the classroom, new evidence is unavoidable and teachers have available much that is fortuitous. Janie momentarily exposed her secret to her teacher when she reacted, incorrectly, as though she were being accused by the teacher of not listening.

With this new, fortuitously gained observation, the teacher could formulate a tentative new guess, one which was parsimonious but could account for all her prior observations; that Janie felt guilty all the time, that she was on the *qui vive* every moment, guarding herself against involvement that might increase the load of guilt already too heavy for her to bear.

The teacher tested her hypothesis by presenting the assignment to all the children—an assignment expected to elicit from a guilty child reactions different from those of the other children. Some wrote about what was found inside the vase. Some wrote about where it had come from, who had made it. But Janie wrote what we could predict a child would write who expected to be accused of wrongdoing, and told her teacher indirectly what she did not have the words to say straight out.

A. USING THE RESOURCES OF THE CLASSROOM

The classroom offers rich resources for hypothesis testing. There are hundreds of stimulating objects, thousands of interactions between people which occur every day. Some examples might be drawn from Mike and Peter, cases mentioned earlier.

Peter was a child who was hard to reach. He might have acted like an inanimate lump in a physical examination and could have refused to respond to a psychological examiner in a one-hour session. But the classroom has temptations which are hard for any child to resist: mechanical gadgets like the tape recorder and projector, problems to be looked into like the wired board, a rabbit with the same name! The classroom is no place to hide, even for a child like Peter who wants to pull his shell in after him.

Peter's teacher used many classroom resources, and she used them in a particular way. She chose those which could speak directly to his particular needs. She used some to gain insight into his peculiar limitations. He spoke so rarely and did so little class work that he could have been anonymous. However, he could operate the tape recorder, and she knew that even if he did not use words, he was able to solve one kind of problem. Guessing that he could solve other problems of that kind, she brought in a board which was wired on the back and had lights on the front. The lights would not flash until the wires were connected correctly, a non-

verbal problem. Peter solved this, giving her additional evidence that he could solve a relatively difficult problem if he would. When the film projector would not work, (and what teacher has not faced that embarrassment!) Peter really helped her, not "just pretend" help, but real help she appreciated and to which she could respond.

When it was established that Peter was interested in mechanical problems and had abilities to solve them, she used his interest and ability to put him in contact with others. He was assigned to build a telephone, a complex, challenging task, which easily and appropriately brought him into interaction with other children.

If one examines carefully each task she set him, each classroom resource she used—the Polaroid camera, the rabbit, the art work—one sees that each task spoke to both his limitations and his abilities, to the areas of life in which he was more capable than other children as well as those in which he was less capable. These areas were not treated as "limitations" and "strengths" merely, but rather as a part of leading a human in small steps out of incapacity to self realization. This movement is not just what should happen to a disabled child, but what should happen to all children with their different patterns of power.

B. WAITING FOR GROWTH

Children do not change in a moment. Development of one's powers is a lifelong task, and teachers often have to wait for it. Sometimes the results of what a teacher does are not visible for a long time, perhaps not until the child is gone from that teacher's class.

Janie did not smile while she was in Mrs. Arthur's class, nor did she change much during the year Mrs. Arthur knew her. Mrs. Arthur had support for her hypothesis. Janie did feel guilty, not just when she had done something she felt was wrong but even when she knew that she was innocent. Mrs. Arthur used the resources of the classroom to teach Janie some preliminary lessons and just had to hope that some day this solemn child might show some sign that she had learned them:

> Mrs. Arthur smiled at Janie often, a reassuring, warming smile, to let her know things were all right. She graded Janie's papers by commenting on the ideas rather than concentrating on details. She assigned Janie jobs where details were unimportant. She had a lesson on *estimating* distances and had the class write up the advantages of estimation over exact measurement. She taught Janie how to check her own work in order that she could be fairly sure it was correct before she turned it in.
>
> Since she and Janie have been communicating a little more (mostly in writing!), her teacher has a new hypothesis: she thinks Janie can

never express even mild annoyance openly, and is afraid to cry or release her feelings of frustration in any way. She wonders if Janie uses so much energy to hold herself down that she has no impulses, good or bad. Mrs. Arthur says if Janie has a temper outburst, she will not "put her down," but will just be glad to know there's something human down there. If that happens, Mrs. Arthur will try to teach Janie to fight *constructively*, to teach her that someone, her teacher at least, can accept her negative feelings and that love can survive disagreement, even anger. But that's a *long* way off.

Real development, growth which starts deep inside, is possible in the school because there is time for it and it is not "made up" but is appropriate and rewarded. The classroom is the child's natural habitat where he acts as he typically *is*. He is there not just for an hour, a day, or a summer camp, but all his child's life. He did not become as he is in a moment and will not change in another one. Teachers need to know that each moment is important, but that one great resource of the school is time.

VII. HOW ADMINISTRATORS CAN HELP

Who is important to a teacher in her teaching? The study showed that for the student teachers, the person most important to them was the someone to whom they could really talk, with whom they could "let down their hair" or "level with." Often it was a spouse, some member of their car pool, the classroom teacher with whom they worked, or another student teacher who shared the same concerns, who would listen and understand.

To an overwhelming majority of working teachers, the school principal was the single most important person. More than anyone else, teachers seemed to feel the principal created the climate in which they taught; he set the limits, handed out rewards and punishments, and most important, constructed the invisible value and power structures in the school.

A. VERBALIZING POLICY

The earliest concern of both new teachers and student teachers was their own place in the value structure of the school. They needed to dis-

cover how to get things done, what they were permitted to do themselves, and what restraints were placed upon them. Most of all, they tried early and persistently to discover what the principal really valued, particularly if they sensed a difference from what the principal *said* was valued. They noticed if approval was given to teachers who had quiet classrooms and "silent group work" rather than to teachers who allowed children to move about. They noted if neat records were valued more than field trips. Teachers who moved from one school to another said their teaching styles changed, as much because of the new administrative atmosphere, as because of the new children.

Teachers generally felt more sure of themselves, more able to be aware of themselves and the children, when administrative policy was verbalized, when the principal himself was an aware person who understood himself and was frank about his expectations and values. Even if the principal did not *say* what his policies were, teachers could feel secure if the visible and invisible value structures were congruent, i.e., if what the principal said he valued was what he actually rewarded.

B. UNDERSTANDING TEACHERS' CONCERNS

Some evidence was found to indicate that in many cases, teachers' concerns occur in a sequence and that unless earlier concerns are resolved, teachers cannot become deeply involved with later tasks. In general, until the teacher feels secure herself, she is not likely to help children feel secure. Just understanding that these concerns are usual, that most teachers are at some time concerned with these same problems, may help administrators in orienting new teachers. It may also improve communication between teachers and their principals if both can discuss such professional problems openly.

Understanding that the teacher's task is a complex one is important, too. Teachers are often under stress because of the complexity of their jobs. They feel pressure from the parents and from children. They may also reproach themselves for what they regard as their inadequacies.

People under stress often act like "sick people." They appear to be tense, have difficulty concentrating, cry, and show other emotion. In the work with prospective teachers, it was noted that many—perhaps half—showed deep emotion. They expressed feelings of loneliness, anger, depression, and indecision. But the vast majority of those who did so were not "emotionally disturbed" as one generally interprets that term. They were simply under stress and appropriately concerned about some problem and expressing their involvement openly.

People under stress need help. When, as in teaching, the stress is expected and expression of emotion appropriate, such help should be

planned and provided in the same way that books and buildings are planned and provided. Administrators cannot themselves provide the kind of help required. Even administrators with considerable psychological sophistication seem to be prevented from functioning as counselors to teachers because they are generally perceived as evaluators by their teachers. Administrators can, however, provide the resources, the facilities, and the climate in which such help is available. They can budget the funds, recruit consultants, provide privacy (a necessity), and allow confidential communication between consultant and teachers. When teachers seek available assistance, administrators can accept the teacher's need for private consultation as evidence she is seeking to *solve* a problem rather than as evidence that she *has* a problem.

C. ALLOWING FREEDOM TO FAIL

Some teaching problems are so complex that there seem to be no solutions. Teachers in the project needed to understand that some problems have many solutions, some have few, and some have none, now. They also needed to understand that every teacher who tries to help many children *must* fail with some. A teacher who has never failed has probably avoided tackling those problems where the probability of failure is high. Tolerating failure is a necessary step in gathering information because it is gathered only when the problem is unresolved. When the solution is apparent, more information is not necessary. If a teacher is not free to fail, she is not free to tackle problems most in need of her professional competence. Students can solve easy problems themselves!

Administrators apparently vary widely in the "freedom to fail" which they allow teachers. More important, the areas in which the principal allows failure and those where failure is regarded as incompetence, need to be made explicit. If it is not, teachers waste a lot of time and effort trying to discover what the tolerated and punished areas are, and often children suffer while they are doing it.

D. TOLERATING UNSOLVED PROBLEMS

"People problems" are complex, and the deeper a teacher delves into them, the more complex they sometimes become. Complexity is taxing; thus, it is natural to try to keep things simple, perhaps by offering or demanding plausible solutions early, before the full complexity of the situation is apparent. In part, this is what Mrs. Martin tried to do with Mary. She suggested an easy solution to her problem of procrastination—just get started and all would be well.

Complex problems, however, do not succumb to peremptory command, quick consolation or magical solutions. They require listening and

waiting on a lot of evidence. Administrators may need to tolerate ambiguity and unsolved problems if teachers are expected to do so.

E. SEEING THEMSELVES AS PEOPLE

New administrators may themselves have some of the same concerns new teachers have, and may need help just as the teachers do. Sometimes administrators' private motives are as apparent to their teachers as teachers' motives are to pupils. As one teacher said, "Because two teachers were persistently late, the superintendent got us all together and emphasized the importance of punctuality. The ninety-eight who were on time got mad of course. But I knew he was having trouble with the school board. I guess he thought the meeting was a way to keep from making anybody mad."

Administrators probably run into the same kinds of situations with teachers that teachers encounter with pupils. The current project has not delved into the psychological complexities of the administrator's tasks, but a perceptive, experienced administrator could probably apply much of what has been said about teacher-pupil relationships to principal-teacher relationships.

Teachers have available to them one kind of information of which administrators have very little: normative data about the population they are attempting to service. Much is known about the development of children, and instruments are available to predict children's performance. Psychologists have largely ignored the area of teacher education until quite recently. As one administrator succinctly put it, "Psychologists have been like that Fire Department in Westchester that was so exclusive it had an unlisted number." Administrators and others who attempt to help teachers need more such information about teaching in order that they can themselves become perceptive observers and hypothesis testers.

VIII. CONCLUSION

Establishing norms is one objective of the Research and Development Center in Teacher Education of The University of Texas. Specifying

components of the psychological complexity of the educator's task is another. And learning how unique individuals can best be taught to teach is still another. Hopefully, the Center's efforts will cast light on these processes and therefore aid both teachers and school administrators with their awesome responsibility.

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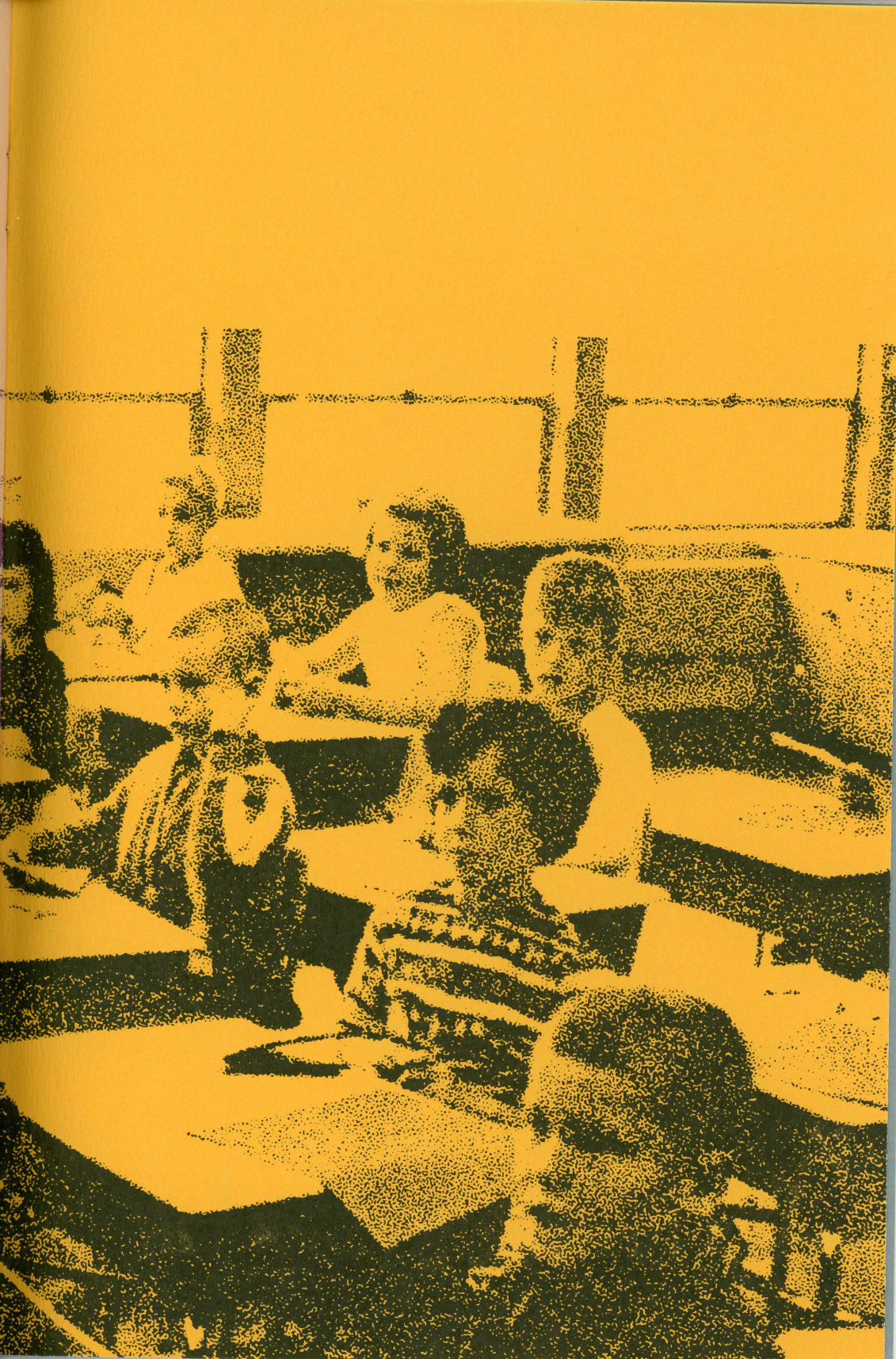


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